

Highway Trucks & Buses

The noxious fumes from the tailpipes of trucks and buses is not only an assault to our sense of smell, it's also toxic—especially to children and their developing lungs. Trucks and buses, which represent only a small share of the total vehicles on today's highways, are responsible for a disproportionate amount of toxic pollution.

Although they account for less than six percent of the miles driven by highway vehicles in the United States, trucks and buses are responsible for:

- one-quarter of smog-causing pollution from highway vehicles
- more than half the soot from highway vehicles
- the majority of the cancer threat posed by air pollution in some urban areas
- six percent of the nation's global warming pollution
- more than one-tenth of America's oil consumption

Luckily, a host of diesel cleanup technologies and cleaner fuel alternatives can slash pollution 90 percent or more. UCS is working federally and in California to get cleaner diesel and alternative fuels off the shelf and onto our roads. Here's some of our activities:

Federal

Defending new tailpipe standards from attacks: The EPA passed new standards requiring vehicles built in 2007 to become significantly cleaner. Unfortunately, since the new requirements were passed in 2000, the auto industry has periodically attacked them and tried to pressure the EPA into weakening its standards. UCS has joined forces with other environmental nonprofits, public health groups, and concerned citizens to protect the standards. So far, public health has trumped automakers' interests. UCS will continue to work with other groups to stave off attempts to weaken tailpipe standards.

Advocating for incentives and regulations to clean up existing engines: Diesel engines are built to last ten, twenty, even thirty years. Without action by states and the federal government, these engines will continue to pollute for decades into the future. Luckily, there are a host of cleanup technologies that can dramatically cut emissions. A mix of mandates and incentives can get these cleanup technologies out of the laboratory and onto vehicles.

California

Supporting funding for diesel cleanup: In 1999, California's air quality problems led the state to create a landmark program to clean up dirty diesel engines. The Carl Moyer Program provides incentive funds to help truck owners defray the costs of cleaner diesel or alternative-fuel engines. The program has been an overwhelming clean air success, but until recently, has struggled for funding. Through strong lobbying and advocacy, UCS was part of a coalition that helped secure about \$140 million per year for the Program,

starting in 2005. California estimates that to achieve the national air quality standards, investment in the Moyer Program needs to increase to \$300 million per year. UCS is working with other groups in the state to monitor progress and to identify more funding.

Passing strong retrofit regulations: California is leading the nation on cleaning up diesel vehicles, with a plan to cut diesel emissions 75 percent by 2010 and 85 percent by 2020. These laudable goals depend on passing strict regulations to clean up the existing fleets of diesel engines. UCS is pushing California to fulfill its goals by passing strong rulemakings.

Source: Union of Concerned Scientists:

http://www.ucsusa.org/clean_vehicles/solutions/cleaner_diesel/highway-trucks-buses.html